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Request for Information Reference: 11.19.16

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Email only

6 December 2019

### **Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information**

Thank you for your request for information received on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2019 in relation to the County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (Trust). We are dealing with your request under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You requested information regarding ophthalmology waiting lists. Specifically you requested information as follows:

**1. *How many patients do you have on your waiting lists who require a follow-up appointment in ophthalmology?***

Answer: 1,851 in total on the waiting list.

**2. *Over the last year (i.e. from November 2018 to October 2019), how many patients exceeded the length of time requested by their consultant/ doctor before being seen for an ophthalmology follow up appointment?***

Answer: The Trust is unable to provide this data as follow-ups were previously managed through a manual paper process and a new electronic system has just been introduced to record when appointment falls due and the date of the next appointment.

The Trust does not have a central record of this information and estimates that it would take a number of days to gather the information for the 1,851 patients.

Therefore, we are refusing this section of your request for information pursuant to section 12 of the Act on the grounds that we estimate that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit. The appropriate limit at the present time is £450.00 which equates to eighteen and quarter hours of work by a member of staff at the rate of £25 per hour.

**3. How long had they waited past their target date? Please give the total number and also break down by the following categories?**

- **Under a month**
- **One month to six months**
- **Six months to a year**
- **Over a year.**

Answer: As above, the Trust is unable to provide data for period November 2018-October 2019, but we can confirm that at end of October 2019 there were 319 overdue reviews in Ophthalmology in the 'one month to six month' category.

With regards to the response provided below, 319 patients have been identified as having overdue reviews in Ophthalmology in the 'one month to six month' category.

**4. In how many of these cases was a harm review carried out?**

Answer: In order to answer questions 4-7 we would need the patient details for each of these cases and then search the system to confirm whether they were reported as incidents, and if so what happened after they were. The Trust is unable to provide the individual patient data to answer question 2 and so without that we are unable to say which of them have had harm reviews.

**5. What are the criteria for carrying out a harm review?**

Answer: Please see the answer to Q4.

**6. Did the harm reviews reveal any patients had come to harm (please give numbers and the degree of harm suffered)?**

Answer: Please see the answer to Q4.

**7. Please also attach internal or external reports relating to issues with follow up appointments in ophthalmology.**

Answer: Please see the answer to Q4.

In line with the Information Commissioner's directive on the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 your request will form part of our



County Durham  
and Darlington

NHS Foundation Trust

disclosure log. Therefore, a version of our response which will protect your anonymity will be posted on the County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust website.

If you have any queries or wish to discuss the information supplied, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number or at the above address.

If you are unhappy with the way your request for information has been handled, you can request a review by writing to:

The Chief Executive  
County Durham & Darlington NHS Foundation Trust  
Darlington Memorial Hospital  
Hollyhurst Road  
Darlington  
DL3 6HX

If, you remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request or complaint, you have a right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Website: [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk).

There is no charge for making an appeal.

Yours sincerely

**Joanna Tyrrell**  
Freedom of Information Officer



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